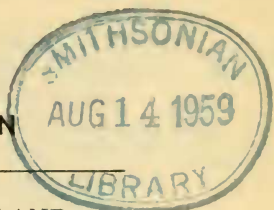


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PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON



NATURAL HISTORY OF PLUMMERS ISLAND,
MARYLAND¹

XII. A Biological Note on *Trypoxylon richardsi* Sandhouse

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Trypoxylon (Trypoxylon) richardsi Sandh. is one of our uncommon eastern wasps and the only described member of the Rufidens Group in the United States except for the even rarer *T. bridwelli* Sandh. from Brownsville, Texas. On September 6, 1958, I found a 2-celled nest (9658 A) in a boring in soft pith of a dead twig of the fringe tree, *Chionanthus virginica*, at Plummers Island, Maryland.

The dead twig containing the nest was 12 mm. in diameter. The nest was in a boring which measured 37 mm. in length and 1.9 mm. in diameter. There was a thin clay partition at the bottom of the boring and then two cells 10 mm. long, each closed by a clay partition 1/2 mm. in thickness. The boring was empty above these cells. On September 6 the bottom cell held a cocoon containing a wasp prepupa. The cocoon was 7.5 mm. long and 1.5 mm. in diameter, spun of light cream-colored silk, subopaque, and very similar in appearance and texture to that of *Trypoxylon (T.) frigidum* Sm. The other cell held a number of very small, dead, immature spiders, the prey stored by the wasp. The nest was kept outdoors from October, 1958, through March, 1959, and then

¹The following numbers of this series have been published previously: I (Introduction), Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash. 48:115-117. 1935; II (Flowering plants and ferns), op. cit. 118-134; III (Mosses), op. cit. 135-137; IV (Birds), op. cit. 159-167; V (Fungi), op. cit. 49:123-131. 1936; VI (Reptiles and amphibians), op. cit. 50:137-139. 1937; VII (Hepaticeae), 52:21-22. 1939; VIII (Lichens), op. cit. 23-26; IX (Mammals), op. cit. 131-134; X (Flowering plants and ferns, Supplement 1), op. cit. 66:31-38. 1953; XI (Blue-green algae), op. cit. 67:239-241. 1954.



was brought into my office. A female of *richardsi* emerged from the cocoon on April 29.

Scanty data on specimens of the *Rufidens* Group in the U. S. National Museum suggest that its members usually utilize abandoned borings of other insects or other cavities in twigs or stems as nesting sites. A male of *richardsi* was reared June, 1883, by T. Pergande from a twig gall on oak from "Va.". An undescribed species from Florida was reared from Rhodes grass infested with scale insects, presumably from nests in the stems. A female of *rufidens* Cam. was reared September 19, 1935, from a stem of *Vanda* sp. (a cultivated orchid) at Balboa, C. Z., Panama. *T. richardsi* has never utilized wooden traps at Plummers Island, but perhaps the smallest boring I use (3.2 mm. diameter) is too large to attract this small wasp.